

Living, Breathing, Transforming our Americas:

Regional Strategy 2025–2030

The Americas is a vibrant and colorful region, full of resilience and hope. GFC recognizes many positive signs of progress towards the realization of young people's rights and yet, many challenges remain, and new threats loom on the horizon. The accelerating erosion of democracy and the criminalization of social protest and youth activism seriously affect the free exercise of citizenship by young people. Violence against children and youth in Latin America is an alarming phenomenon that manifests itself in various forms, from physical and sexual abuse to forced recruitment by criminal groups. The rise of far-right conservative movements threatens recent gains in gender equality and sexual and reproductive rights. One of the most unexpected and serious challenges has been the reduction of international cooperation funds supporting essential services to children and youth.

Despite this complex panorama, GFC reaffirms our commitment to the defense of rights and promotion of well-being of children, adolescents and youth in the region, whom we honor and value in all their diversity. We continue to work hand in hand with local partner organizations so that young people are recognized as political subjects with specific needs and vulnerabilities, but also with the decision-making capacity and the potential to positively transform their families and communities. Every day, we witness the unwavering efforts of grassroots organizations, youth collectives, collaborative networks, and community leaders, who fight for the rights, autonomy, and dignity of Latin American children and youth. They remind us that a more just and humane world, in which communities are nourished by the ideas, dreams and projects of diverse young people is not only possible, but increasingly urgent. Through art, play, care, connection with the land and nature, joy, critical thinking and community healing, our partner organizations create new spaces for dialogue and intergenerational co-creation, promoting caring systemic and sustainable changes in favor of children, adolescents and youth in the region. GFC's Americas team will remain committed to ensuring that these efforts are not only sustained, but flourish, multiply, and connect.

By accompanying and supporting committed and resilient community and grassroots organizations, we promote their internal strengthening while generating new spaces for dialogue that contribute to collective well-being. In this way, and by adding our voices, we contribute to the strengthening of ecosystems of social change that guarantee the rights and dignity of diverse children, adolescents, and youth in the Americas.

1. Our partnership model

Although our activities and support are flexible and always adapted to the context and specific needs of our partner organizations, in recent years GFC has refined a comprehensive partnership model based on the following main elements:

a) Fund organizations. We provide core, flexible, trust-based, multi-year funding to emerging grassroots and community organizations, giving organizations the space to innovate and adapt to ever-changing contexts.

b) Strengthen organizations. Through participatory and playful tools, we strengthen internal organizational capacities, from the conceptual to the operational.

c) Strengthen strategies for social change. We promote taking a systemic view and responding with a community-led approach built on collective co-creation, respect for cultural and territorial diversities, the centering of rights and well-being, and intergenerational dialogue.

d) Strengthen alliances and collaborative networks. We integrate each partner organization into a cohort of peers and a broad network of support, facilitating learning, collective reflection, exchange of experiences, and thematic and regional collaborations.

e) Influence and advocate, grounded in listening, respect and coherence. At GFC, we understand that our work is not the direct implementation of projects; however, we do not isolate ourselves either. We take an active role in building fairer and more inclusive civil society ecosystems; we participate in spaces for dialogue and advocacy within the philanthropic sector; and we add our resources, knowledge, and energies to the movement for social change.

We have a dynamic, committed, multicultural team from Mexico, Guatemala, Honduras, Brazil and the United States that facilitates the co-creation of initiatives grounded in diverse contexts and aligned with the objectives and needs of our partner organizations.

2. GFC's values in action in the Americas

We honor GFC's core values, grounding and transversing them throughout our work. We are committed to ***transformative partnership***, that challenges adultism and expands intergeneration co-creation based on strong relationships, creativity, and the capacity of young people as agents of social change in their families and communities. We approach ***learning with joy, using art, play and delight*** to connect, fuel creativity, and challenge norms. Our ***passion for humanity drives us to prioritize community-centered care, safeguarding, and wellbeing***, with tenderness, active listening and solidarity; for us, care is a political commitment and a transformative process that rebuilds the emotional bonds that drive social change. We seek ***genuine inclusion through dialogue, diversity and integrity for social justice***, fostering cooperation that puts the voices of the groups historically most affected by social injustices at the center. We ***act with courage in pursuit of excellence in making real systemic, sustainable changes***, facing down structural inequity and violence with our communities' diverse humanity always held in the center.

3. Contextualizing GFC's strategic areas for the Americas

GFC's 2025–2030 strategy for the Americas seeks to build upon recent experience in the areas of gender justice, migration, and education, while committing to courageously addressing emerging, complex and interdependent challenges faced by children, adolescents, and youth in the region across all six of GFC's areas of focus.

- ***Gender Justice: Intersectional and Diverse Perspectives***

Gender-based violence against children, adolescents, and youth in the Americas manifests itself not only in physical and psychological aggression, but also in social exclusion, systematic discrimination and barriers to basic rights such as education, health and political participation. Our experiences in the [U Muuk'il Xch'úupalo'ob \(The Strength of Girls\)](#) initiative in the Yucatan Peninsula, the continuation of the [HEEL initiative](#) for healthy masculinities, and the recent launch of our strategy to support LGBTQIA+ youth, *Resistir Gozando*, have vested in us valuable learnings. There is still much to be done to support gender-transformative approaches that modify attitudes and behaviors and weave new nonviolent narratives from young people across the intersections of gender, race, sexual orientation, social class, disability, origin and territory.

- ***Safety and Well-being: Children and Youth on the Move and Facing Violence***

Young people in the Americas, facing structural, gender, community and family violence, in addition to impoverishment, exclusion, racism and discrimination, are increasingly migrating—to cities, across countries and border, and even back home—which can further expose them to exploitation, human trafficking, criminalization and the denial of basic rights such as education, health, identity or legal personhood. In 2025, we concluded the [Girls Experiencing Migration Initiative](#), forming a transnational network of over a dozen organizations protecting and accompanying adolescent migrant girls. We now seek to continue comprehensive support for young people on the move, making visible the multiple and specific forms of violence they experience, expanding collaboration with community networks, and promoting the leadership of migrant children and youth.

- ***Education: Relevant, Inclusive, Contextualized, and Beginning in Early Childhood***

The COVID-19 pandemic caused severe disruptions to education in the Americas, and exposed deep flaws in the education system, caused largely by historical neglect and low state investment. [RECARGA](#) in Guatemala and Honduras, the [SEED initiative](#) for early childhood development in Honduras, CEToC in Brazil (and previously in Colombia; [PEAK](#) in English) and [U Muuk'il Xch'úupalo'ob](#) in Mexico all work to strengthen diverse and culturally relevant educational strategies that address the holistic educational development of marginalized children, adolescents, and youth. We believe that while there is an urgent need to improve access, infrastructure and basic services, it is also essential to transform pedagogies, placing the dignity of children at the center of the process.

- ***Youth Power: Strengthening Youth Activism and Leadership***

In the Americas, youth activism has emerged as a key force in advocating for human rights, social justice, the environment, and gender equity, despite persistent criminalization of youth organizing. In recent years, thanks GFC global initiatives such as the [Spark Fund](#) and collaboration with peers such

as the CAMY Fund, with whom we launched research on [disruptive youth activism](#) in the region in 2023, GFC has accumulated valuable learnings for promoting the mobilization and organization of Latin American youth. In the context of advancing authoritarian regimes, hate speech, and attacks against human rights defenders, it is urgent that we strengthen the role of organized youth fighting for a more just, diverse, and sustainable future, while putting care, healing, well-being and safety of youth movements at the center.

- ***Climate Justice: Living Well and the Sovereignty of Earth's Peoples***

The continuing history of environmental racism exacerbates the exposure of vulnerable children to the most severe effects of the climate crisis. According to UNICEF, more than half of young people between the ages of 16 and 24 already experience eco-anxiety, associated with financial, food and physical insecurity in the face of an uncertain future. Across various initiatives we have seen youth act as a force for eco-resistance, and in Brazil in 2025, GFC is piloting a model for strengthening the role of young people in climate solutions, promoting their participation in spaces for dialogue and decision-making. Recognizing the intersectionality of the crisis we will support the leadership of indigenous, rural, black, *quilombola*, feminist, LGBTQIA+ and urban peripheral youth and grassroots movements, to defend their environmental rights and build a more just and sustainable future.

- ***Solidarity in Emergencies: Responding***

We believe that the capacity for timely, flexible and care-focused response in the face of emergencies is essential to sustain relationships of trust in times of crisis, both between GFC and its partner organizations, and between organizations and their communities. We maintain diverse sources of emergency funds to ensure rapid and contextualized responses to humanitarian emergencies (natural, social, or political) and serious threats to individuals and groups in our network of alumni and current partners.

4. Priority Geographies

Traditionally, GFC has focused its efforts on Mexico and Central America, and our commitment to generate sustainable and transformative impact in these areas is unwavering. GFC also hopes to expand its presence in South America and the Caribbean, building upon our historical presence, recent regional education and youth power initiatives, the expansion in 2025 of our healthy masculinities work into Colombia, and the launch of our climate justice pilot in Brazil. We invite conversations with donors on collaborating in any country and geography in the region, recognizing that not every social ecosystem would integrate GFC equally. In all new geographies, we commit to building a foundation of trust with local communities and civil society so that together we can co-design partnerships guided by their priorities and honoring their leadership.